

Message Text

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12

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR,SOCI, ET

SUBJECT:REUTERS ARTICLE ON ETHIOPIAN FAMINE

REF: ADDIS 12525 AND PREVIOUS

1. SUMMARY OF NOVEMBER 2 REUTERS ARTICLE BY JOHN TALBOT, DATELINE ADDIS, FOLLOWS:
2. CITING UN REPORT, ARTICLE STATES AT LEAST 75,000 PEOPLE ESTIMATED DEAD AS RESULT FAMINE IN SHOA, WOLLO AND TIGRE DURING PAST SIX MONTHS. LOSS OF LIVESTOCK HAS BEEN CATASTROPHIC AND PEASANTS IN STRICKEN REGION NOW COMPLETELY DESTITUTE.
3. ALTHOUGH IEG DENIES TRYING TO HIDE EXTENT OF DROUGHT AND FAMINE, RESIDENT FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS SEEKING INFORMATION "GENERALLY MET WITH BLANK STARES." SOME LOWER ECHELON CIVIL SERVANTS ADMITTED CRISIS BUT, FEARING

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REPRISALS FROM SUPERIORS, WERE LOATH TO SPEAK OUT.

4. ARTICLE REPORTS IEG OCTOBER 23 STATEMENT CONCERNING ETHIOPIAN APRIL APPEAL FOR HELP TO INTERNATIONAL AID DONORS BUT NOTES THAT, BY MAY, STARVING, DESTITUTE PEASANTS WERE STREAMING INTO TOWNS FOR FOOD AND AUTHORITIES WERE FORCED TO SET UP FAMINE REFUGEE CAMPS. IT CONTINUES: "TALES OF HORROR AND INDESCRIBABLE FILTH OF THESE CAMPS, WHERE INHABITANTS LIVED AND DIED IN THEIR OWN EXCREMENT, HAVE BEEN BROADCAST AND TELEVISED OUTSIDE OF ETHIOPIA BUT THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT DECLARES THAT THESE REPORTS WERE BASED ON 'UNPRECEDENTED IGNORANCE AND EXAGGERATION'."

5. ARTICLE ASKS IF IEG APPEALED FOR INTERNATIONAL AID IN TIME AND IF HELP WILL COME TOO LATE. IT CONCLUDES THAT DROUGHT AND FAMINE EFFECTS WILL CONTINUE WELL INTO NEXT YEAR DESPITE MASSIVE INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS.

6. DECONTROL UPON RECEIPT. KISSINGER

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